

Tiftarea Academy

2022-2023

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Tiftarea Academy admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Tiftarea Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, athletics, or other school-administered programs.

STUDENT HANDBOOK GENERAL INFORMATION

PHILOSOPHY

Tiftarea Academy is a K4 through 12th grade independent school which seeks to provide foundations for a satisfying and productive life for each of its students.

Academically, Tiftarea Academy encourages excellence for all students and strives to lay the proper foundation for student success at the college level. The educational environment is based on the traditional values of honor, achievement, and citizenship and is characterized by a strong sense of family. High standards for student behavior and appearance contribute to the development of the total student and foster a sense of individual and community responsibility.

Students of Tiftarea Academy are encouraged to take advantage of a wide range of activities in recognition of the belief that many valuable lessons can be acquired outside of the classroom. Through athletics and other extracurricular activities, students learn the necessity of physical conditioning, the demands of competition, and the value of fair play. Additionally, students learn the responsibility of leadership and the obligations of group effort. Through service to the school and community, students learn their role and responsibility to others.

Tiftarea Academy seeks students who demonstrate ability and interest in a broad and stimulating educational experience. The school community is enriched through students with high ideals, academic ability, and the potential for growth. In all phases of school life, Tiftarea Academy is “Committed to Excellence.”

ORGANIZATION

Tiftarea Academy, Inc. was chartered as a nonprofit organization by the state of Georgia in 1969. The school was founded by parents in the Tifton area and is governed by a Board of Trustees. Tiftarea Academy began operation in September 1970, in Ty Ty, Georgia and moved to Chula, Georgia in September 1971. Tiftarea is a coeducational, day school for students in grades K4 through 12th grades.

MISSION

Tiftarea Academy believes strongly in its motto, “Committed to Excellence,” by creating a Christian learning environment and promoting lifelong learning through academics, physical fitness, and school activities that enrich the curriculum.

ACCREDITATION

Tiftarea Academy is accredited by the Southern Association of College and Schools (SACS), as well as the Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS). In addition, Tiftarea Academy is “Accredited with Quality” by the Georgia Accreditation Commission (GAC). Tiftarea is also a member in good standing of the Georgia Independent School Association (GISA), which sanctions all interscholastic competition.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES

Because Tiftarea Academy offers a college preparatory curriculum, the school accepts students who are likely to pursue higher education after graduation. Admission is by application and application does not ensure automatic acceptance. Admission is based on the applicant’s record of achievement, including both grades and standardized test scores, on professional and personal recommendations, on previously attended school’s discipline and attendance records, and on the results of an admission test. A visit to the school and personal interview with the Headmaster and/or school counselor are also recommended. Applications are accepted only for students currently in “good standing” with their current or previous school. Homeschooled students will be held to the same admission requirements and must provide documentation from their high school program.

Prior to taking the admission exam, the applicant must pay a non-refundable application fee. The applicant and his parents will be notified of the admissions decision as soon as possible after all conditions of candidacy are met. Students re-enrolling for the upcoming year must pay a non-refundable registration fee to retain his or her place in school.

Pre-Kindergarten students must be four years old on or before September 1 of the year for which they are applying.

Kindergarten students must be five years old on or before September 1 of the year for which they are applying.

No student who has resided in the Tiftarea Academy geographical area for more than one full year may be admitted after **completing their 11th grade year**. Exceptions may be made by petition to the Headmaster and action by the Board of Trustees.

Students are admitted with the understanding that they will remain for the full year, unless otherwise specified at the time of entrance, and that they will conduct themselves as responsible citizens of the school community. Tiftarea Academy reserves the right to suspend or dismiss any student for misconduct or serious violation of school discipline. In the event of suspension, dismissal, or voluntary withdrawal of the student, no refund will be made of tuition, fees, and other charges paid or owed the school. **If a student enters and withdraws twice from Tiftarea Academy, the student will not be allowed to re-enroll. Exceptions may be made by petition to the Headmaster and action by the Board of Trustees.**

Tiftarea Academy admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Tiftarea Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, athletics, or other school-administered programs.

Tiftarea Academy will not make gender identity determinations. The determination will be made by the gender listed on the birth certificate at the time of birth. Students will be expected to adhere to all restrictions, guidelines, and rules dealing with gender based on this determination.

DONATIONS

Tiftarea Academy encourages donations to the school through direct gifts, donations to the Capital Campaign, Annual Fund, and donations to the Booster Club. Memorials in memory of or in honor of loved ones or to recognize occasions are also encouraged. Such donations are tax exempt and are a significant supplement to the school's tuition income.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Promotion Policy (K4 & K5)

Promotion from grades K4 & K5 requires mastery of phonics and math skills listed on the K4 & K5 report cards. If mastery of skills is not obtained by the student, the teacher, in her professional opinion, will make suggestions to the parents if extra practice and/or tutoring should be done in order for the student to reach his/her highest potential to be successful in the next grade level. If the teacher recommends the student repeat either K4 or K5 and the parents object to the recommendation, then the student will be required to pass an entrance exam to enter the next grade level.

PROMOTION POLICY (1st THROUGH 5th GRADES)

Promotion from grades one through five requires a passing grade in five (5) academic subjects. In the event only five subjects (5) are offered, the student must then pass four (4). Any student failing two (2) or more subjects for the academic year may not be promoted to the next grade and may not be offered a contract to return to Tiftarea Academy for the following year.

Students failing two (2) or more subjects for the year may file an appeal to the academic committee for reinstatement. If the academic committee chooses to reinstate a student, the student will be reinstated at the designated grade level, placed on academic probation, and will remain on probation until successfully completing the fifth (5th) grade. If at any time during the probationary period the student fails two (2) or more subjects for the year, the student will not be offered another contract and will not be afforded another appeal. All decisions made by the academic committee are final.

Students are highly encouraged to read and take Accelerated Reader (AR) tests during the school year. All of the various Tiftarea Academy reading programs are based on AR points. Students will need to earn a set amount of points to be eligible for a reading certificate/award. The number of points is based on the grade level. The top five readers from 3rd – 5th grade will receive a medal at Honors Day.

PROMOTION POLICY (6th and 7th GRADES)

Promotion from grades six and seven requires a passing grade in four (4) academic subjects. In the event that a middle school student fails one academic course, he/she will be placed on academic probation in that subject area for the following school year. Students failing two (2) subjects for the year will be required to attend summer school in both academic classes in order to be promoted to the next grade level. Upon completion of summer school, the student will be on academic probation for the following year in both subjects. Any student failing the same academic subject while on academic probation will be required to attend summer school for remediation.

Any student failing three (3) or more subjects for the academic year may not be promoted to the next grade and may not be offered a contract to return to

Tiftarea Academy for the following year. These students may file an appeal to the academic committee for reinstatement. If the academic committee chooses to reinstate a student, the student will be reinstated at the designated grade level, placed on academic probation, and will remain on probation until successful.

Students are highly encouraged to read and take Accelerated Reader (AR) tests during the school year. All of the various Tiftarea Academy reading programs are based on AR points. Students will need to earn a set amount of points to be eligible for a reading certificate/award. The number of points is based on the grade level. The top five readers from each grade will receive a medal at Honors Day.

PROMOTION POLICY (8th THROUGH 12th GRADES)

Promotion at the high school level requires students to successfully obtain academic units towards graduation:

Eighth Grade	Promote from 7th Grade
Ninth Grade	All core academic subjects must be passed; Failures must be recovered in summer school. (Exception is Algebra I, which must be repeated)
Tenth Grade	6 Units
Eleventh Grade	12 Units
Twelfth Grade	17 Units
Graduation	24 Units (9th - 12 th)

Units earned in eighth grade are posted on a supplemental page of the high school transcript. However, they are not included in the total units that apply towards graduation. Credits earned in eighth grade do not apply to the cumulative GPA. Courses awarded units in eighth grade are English I – 1 unit, Algebra I – 1unit, Physical Science – 1unit, and Computer – 1 unit.

If at any point a student does not meet the required number of units to be promoted, the student may not be offered a contract to return to Tiftarea Academy for the following year. Students may obtain the necessary units to remain on track by attending summer school at Tiftarea Academy. Up to eight half units can be recovered in summer school. The highest grade awarded in summer school is a 70. Both the recovery grade and the failing grade are shown on the high school transcript, **and will be included in their GPA. The maximum number of credits a student is allowed to make up through summer school during their high school career(9-12) and apply toward graduation is four (4) full units. Summer school credits earned in 8th grade are excluded from the four (4) unit maximum for grades 9-12.** Any additional recovery beyond the requirements stated above will require approval by the Headmaster. Algebra I taken in 8th grade cannot be recovered in summer school. This course must be repeated.

MINIMUM GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS:

- 4 units of English (9-12)
- 4 units of Mathematics (9-12)
- 3 units of Social Studies
- 4 units of Science

- 1 additional unit of Social Studies (local requirement)
 - 2 units of the same Foreign Language
 - 1 unit of Health and Personal Fitness
 - 5 units of elected study
- Total: 24 units

All students in grades 9-12 are required to take English, math, science, and social studies each semester. All students must have 24 units including: Algebra 1 and Physical Science/Physics.

GRADING PERIODS

Each school year consists of 174 days divided into four grading periods and/or two semester periods.

1. A grade is awarded by the average of the work completed during the grading period.
2. No average higher than 100 will be awarded.
3. Semester exams will consist of a comprehensive two hour test in each subject given at the end of each semester. No semester exam can be retaken without prior approval by the Board of Trustees.
4. The semester averages in each subject will be determined by adding the first grading period twice, the second grading period twice, and the semester exam once. This gives the semester exam a weight of 20% of the semester grade.
5. Students are awarded units for successfully passing a class for the semester.
6. Each class passed for the semester equals one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) unit of credit. See criteria below for Dual Enrollment classes. Semester averages below seventy earn no credit and must be made up during summer school, if courses are available.
7. Exam Exemptions: Middle and high school students will be allowed to exempt **one** exam per semester. They must be passing all subjects for the semester. The two grading periods averaged together determine if they are passing for the semester (69.5 and above). Students may exempt an additional exam each semester based on the following criteria: Fall semester students must meet the annual fund contribution and Spring semester students must meet Boosterthon contribution. In order to be eligible for the additional exemption students **MUST** be passing all subjects. Students must have no more than seven (7) unexcused absences in the class they wish to exempt.

The teachers in grades K4 through 5th grade will determine individually the testing schedule and averaging procedures for their students.

ADVANCED COURSE WORK

Courses are offered each semester to students in grades 9-12. Dual Enrollment students are dually enrolled in both high school and college courses. Classes are taught on the Tiftarea campus or online as applicable. To enroll as a

participant in the Dual Enrollment program, students must meet the eligibility criteria required by the post-secondary institution. **Students committing to Dual Enrollment classes being taught on the Tiftarea Academy campus are required to take Dual Enrollment classes both semesters.** Criteria for each post-secondary institution are available in the Tiftarea Academy guidance office and on each institution's website. The number of Dual Enrollment courses a student will be allowed to take is determined by current legislation and state mandated policies. The student course load must be approved by the Headmaster, Guidance Counselor, and the parent/guardian. Dual Enrollment grades are reported directly to the Tiftarea Academy records office. No average can exceed 100. If a student is withdrawn from a Dual Enrollment class because of grades or not meeting completion requirements, a WF (**W**ithdrawn while **F**ailing) will be recorded on the transcript.

MAKE-UP WORK POLICY

It is the responsibility of the student to make up any work missed during unforeseen absences, and the work should be made up within three school days of the absences. Exceptions will be made based on serious illness or other circumstances. Students with unexcused absences are required to make up all work missed, including tests/quizzes upon their return to school. Students who miss assessments due to unexcused absences will have their test grade reduced by **10 points**. **All excuses must be brought to the front office within three (3) days of returning to school.**

The following are considered excused absences: personal illness, serious illness, or death in the family, religious holidays, absences previously arranged with the school administration, and participation in school-sponsored events.

Students with planned absences must obtain a travel request form from the front office and return it at least 3 days prior to the absence.

GRADUATION

Graduation will be held on the Friday or Saturday night following the last day of senior exams or unless otherwise rescheduled by the Board of Trustees.

Students who are enrolled in a joint enrollment program with a college are required to participate in graduation. Their diplomas will not be issued until their transcripts have been received from the college where the student has been enrolled. Students who complete the requirements for graduation at the end of summer school will receive their diplomas after grades have been received from summer school.

HONOR GRADUATES & SUPERIOR HONOR GRADUATES

Honor graduates are those members of the senior class who have an overall average of **89.5** – 94.4 for work completed in core classes in grades nine through twelve. Superior honor graduates are those members of the Sr. class who have an overall average of **94.5** or above for work completed in core classes in grades nine through twelve. **These grades will be determined at**

the end of the 3rd Nine Weeks posted grades during their twelfth grade year. Rank in class is calculated using the same procedure.

VALEDICTORIAN, SALUTATORIAN and THIRD HONOR GRADUATE

Students that have attended Tiftarea Academy for their entire junior and senior years will be considered for the honor of Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and Third Honor Graduate.

The student having the highest overall average in grades nine through twelve, calculated through the end of the 3rd Nine Weeks posted grades of the twelfth grade year, will be the Valedictorian. The student with the second highest overall average in grades nine through twelve, calculated through the end of the 3rd Nine Weeks posted grades of the twelfth grade year, will be the Salutatorian. The student with the third highest overall average in grades nine through twelve, calculated through the end of the 3rd Nine Weeks posted grades of the twelfth grade year will be the Third Honor Graduate. The academic GPA includes only core classes. Rank in class for grades nine through twelve is earned only in core classes as well.

The Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and Third Honor Graduate will officially be announced at High School Honors Night.

SENIOR PRIVILEGES

Seniors will be given two excused absences from school during the year to be used for college visits. A travel request must be obtained from the front office. Additional days are excused for scholarship interviews at colleges. These days cannot conflict with tests or other school activities. Proof of visitation from the college is required to be excused from school for that day. Prior arrangements must be made by the students to make up any work missed on these days. All make-up work policies apply to these visits.

HEADMASTER'S LIST, HONOR ROLL, AND MERIT LIST

Tiftarea Academy honors students who excel in the classroom each grading period by naming them to the Headmaster's List, Honor Roll, or Merit Roll. Placement in one of these categories is based on the following criteria:

Headmaster's List	Overall G.P.A. of 94.5 or Higher
Honor Roll	Overall G.P.A. of 89.5 – 94.4
Merit Roll	Overall G.P.A. of 79.5 – 89.4

There will be an annual Headmaster's List, Honor Roll, and Merit Roll in addition to the one noted each grading period. The annual recognition is based on the student's cumulative average, which includes semester exams.

No student is eligible for the Headmaster's List, Honor Roll, or Merit Roll if they have a grade below seventy (70), regardless of overall G.P.A.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

The Tiftarea Academy testing program is coordinated and supervised by the school counselor and the faculty. Tiftarea Academy serves as a national test center for the ACT. The ACT will be offered on two occasions during the school day in the academic year.

The national standardized tests administered during the school year are the Iowa Assessments, the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT/MNSQT), Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), and the ACT Assessment.

TRANSCRIPTS

When a student from Tiftarea Academy needs a transcript sent to another school, college, or employer for any reason, a written request must be made by the student to the school office. No transcripts will be sent if fees are owed to the school.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

When a student finds it necessary to withdraw from school during the school year, the following procedures should be taken:

1. Obtain and complete a withdrawal form.
2. Return textbooks and clear any debts owed to the school.
3. Complete a transcript request form so transcripts may be sent to the student's new school.

Transcripts will not be sent until all school property is returned and all debts are cleared.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Tiftarea Academy requests that parents/guardians inform the front office and the child's teacher of any change of address, phone numbers, or contact information

STUDENT SERVICES

STUDENT HANDBOOK

All students at Tiftarea Academy will be issued a student handbook at the beginning of the school year. It is the responsibility of the student/guardian to be familiar with the contents of the student handbook.

LUNCHROOM

Students may bring their lunch or buy the prepared items. Food delivered by parents must be brought to the front office only. The student will be notified to report to the front office to pick up their food during their lunch time. No food may be ordered by parents or students for direct delivery to the school by the vendor at any time during the school day. All food should be eaten in the cafeteria or other designated areas. Each grade is responsible for leaving its section of the lunchroom clean and in good order. While in the cafeteria, students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with school rules, as well as rules of good manners and courtesy. Students shall be under the supervision of school personnel while using the cafeteria. When traveling to and from the lunchroom, students should move orderly and quietly to avoid disturbing classes in progress at the time.

GUIDANCE PROGRAM

The guidance staff is composed of the guidance counselor and the administrative staff. The purpose of guidance within the school is to assist the student in making the most of his/her education. Every staff member seeks to promote better understanding among students, faculty, and parents. Parents are encouraged to seek a conference by calling the school office whenever the staff can be of assistance in answering questions concerning their child's work, providing information, or fulfilling some needed service for the student or parent.

DAILY BULLETIN

Daily announcements are emailed every morning to all staff members as a way to inform the entire student body of activities, absentees, and other important information. Teachers are required to read applicable announcements to students. Upper school students may sign up for the Daily Bulletin through Remind 101.

MEDIA CENTER

The media center is provided as a service to the students and faculty members and must be used accordingly. Students using the media center will be under the supervision of faculty members and the media center director. Proper

conduct in the media center should be observed at all times. Failure to do so could result in loss of privileges. Any and all fines accrued in the media center must be cleared before a student can receive any course credit or before any transcript can be issued.

While in the media center, students have access to the Internet. Students must have signed parental consent forms on file before access to the Internet will be permitted.

CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

The school encourages extracurricular activities, but not at the expense of academic work. All clubs meet on a regular basis and each have an advisor. Interested students should contact the advisor or club president for information. Some of the clubs and organizations are as follows: Beta Club, Jr. Beta Club, Student Government, Literary Team, 4-H Club, Key Club, ExcelClub, Fellowship of Christian Athletes and others.

All fund-raising projects must be approved by the Tiftarea Board of Trustees, through the Headmaster and the faculty advisor prior to planning the project.

ATHLETIC PROGRAM

Tiftarea Academy participates in football, basketball, baseball, softball, wrestling, golf, tennis, track, soccer (girls), cross country, shooting sports, fishing, cheerleading, and swimming on the varsity level. Students may participate in B-Team sports in basketball and baseball. Middle School or Jr. Varsity sports are available in football, basketball, baseball, softball, track, wrestling, cross country, swimming, golf, soccer, and cheerleading. Jr. Pro football, basketball, and cheerleading are available for 5th and 6th grade.

Eligibility for participation is based on meeting certain criteria. A physical examination is required each year for those participating in any athletic program. Students are required to pass five units each semester to maintain his/her eligibility. Excluded from any credit are teacher's aides and office aides or their equivalent. He/she must also meet the requirements set forth by the coaching staff. As a member of the GIAA, the school must also meet the requirements set forth by that body for eligibility in athletics. **Girls may participant on boys' teams when there is no girls' team offered in that sport or activity by the school. Boys may not participate on girls teams. GIAA will not make gender identity determinations. The determination will be made by the gender listed on the birth certificate at the time of birth.**

Students must be in school four (4) full periods of a school day in order to participate in a game or practice. Exceptions for medical reasons or other emergencies will be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Administration/Headmaster. If distance learning is required, Tiftarea Academy will follow guidelines of eligibility set by GIAA.

PARENTAL/ALUMNI ORGANIZATIONS

TEACHERS AND PARENTS (TAP)

The Tiftarea Parent organization has been the backbone of Tiftarea Academy since the conception of the school. Through the sponsoring of several major projects each year, TAP earns monies to supply the “extras” for the teachers and students. Membership is free and open to all parents of Tiftarea Academy students and teachers.

BOOSTER CLUB

The Booster Club is primarily interested in promoting athletics at Tiftarea Academy. Their efforts provide many needs in our athletic program. They meet regularly throughout the school year. Membership is open to anyone vitally interested in our athletic program.

ALUMNI ORGANIZATION

The purpose of the Tiftarea Academy Alumni Association is to provide alumni of the school an opportunity to remain active supporters of the school. The association maintains an up-to-date database of all graduates, plans annual alumnus’ events, assists with planning class reunions, and has a social media Facebook page.

GRANDPARENTS CLUB

The Grandparents Club plays an active role at Tiftarea Academy. The organization is involved in providing funds to help defray expenses that do not fall within the school’s regular budget and assists with many worthwhile projects.

SPECIFIC RULES AND REGULATIONS

DISCIPLINE

Tiftarea Academy expects its students to maintain high standards of behavior both in and out of school. Students in these critical years of development are forming lifetime practices and attitudes, and are living in a time when choices are increasingly difficult because of society's pressures. Tiftarea Academy endeavors to instill in its students healthy habits of mind and body, a clear sense of values, and good moral judgment.

Good teachers always have classrooms that set limits so students know what to expect. A good school also has boundaries, ones that allow young people freedom to grow and choose, but which restricts behavior that is detrimental to the individual, the group, or the mission of the school.

Students who choose not to cooperate within the framework are subject to disciplinary procedures. There is no place in a college preparatory school for misbehavior that compromises the rights of others to learn. Teachers do not have time for students who resist their instructional efforts or attempt to disrupt the orderly procedure of a class.

The faculty and administration do not intend to overlook behavior that does not meet the stated guidelines. Such offenses include being late to school or class, abuse of electronic device policy, lack of class materials, class disturbances, improper dress, and similar actions automatically subject the student to disciplinary action.

More serious offenses such as dismissal from class, disrespect for the teacher, and other like offenses will result in more severe punishment. In major incidents of misconduct or repeated minor offenses of school rules, the administration will contact the parents as soon as possible.

Tiftarea Academy uses various means of punishment such as after-school detention, Saturday detention, break detention, in-school and out-of-school suspension, corporal punishment, and expulsion. **Each student will be charged a cash fee of \$50.00 to cover the cost incurred for Saturday detention.** Which type of punishment a student receives depends upon the nature and/or seriousness of the offense, and previous discipline record.

Discipline is designed to teach each student that he or she is accountable for his or her actions. Fairness and consistency are the goals Tiftarea Academy strives for in regards to discipline.

DISCIPLINE APPEAL PROCEDURES

Each student is afforded the right to an appeal of a **MAJOR** discipline decision. **Major discipline is defined as any issue resulting in home suspension or expulsion.** To file an appeal the following steps must be followed:

1. Appeal to Teacher (if applicable).
2. Appeal to Principal.
3. Appeal to Headmaster.
4. Appeal to Executive Board.

All decisions made by the Executive Board are final.

THE TIFTAREA ACADEMY HONOR CODE

Of utmost importance to Tiftarea Academy is the Honor Code. The school believes that a strong sense of personal honor and integrity is a basic human responsibility and one of the most vital assets a person can have throughout life. It is the desire of Tiftarea Academy that the spirit of the Honor Code continues to grow and becomes a significant force in the life of every student. For the system to be effective every member of the school community must believe in and support the principles upon which this system is based.

To uphold the Honor Code, students are encouraged to report known violations. If a student observes another student committing an Honor Code violation or acting illegally, the student should notify a teacher, a principal, or the Headmaster. Students may request confidentiality. Teachers who have knowledge of an Honor Code violation must notify the principal or the Headmaster.

Every student is honor bound to refrain from lying, cheating, and stealing.

1. Lying is the intentional falsification or denial of fact, or the intentional creating of a false impression or the breaking of a pledge.
2. Cheating is the giving, receiving, or attempting to give or receive unauthorized help that could result in an unfair advantage in completing school work. It is also the representation of another's work as one's own.
3. Stealing is the taking of anything without the consent of the owner.

Punishments for violation of the Honor Code are as follows:

CHEATING

- 1st Offense – A grade of “0” on the test or assignment and after school detention.
- 2nd Offense – A grade of “0” on the test or assignment and two days out of school suspension.
- 3rd Offense – Expulsion from Tiftarea Academy

STEALING

1st Offense – Three (3) days of out of school suspension.

2nd Offense – Expulsion from Tiftarea Academy

LYING

Punishment is subject to Administrator's discretion.

DRESS CODE

Tiftarea Academy strongly believes that self-esteem and discipline are involved in personal appearance. The spirit of the dress code is "appropriateness," and students are encouraged to exercise good judgment in adherence to this spirit. It is school policy that students may enjoy current fashion, but the school reserves the right to inform individuals when their attire does not adhere to the letter and spirit of the established dress standards. The established standards are designed to encourage a strong sense of pride in personal appearance and in the school community. In addition, visitors to the campus should be favorably impressed by Tiftarea Academy's students with regards to neatness, appearance, and pride in dress. **Tiftarea Academy will not make gender identity determinations. The determination will be made by the gender listed on the birth certificate at the time of birth. This includes ALL dress code requirements.**

Students who are found to be in violation of the dress code will receive disciplinary action which may include after school detention or will not be able to participate in any school event, activity, or special occasion. Repeated dress code violations will result in more serious disciplinary action at the discretion of the administration.

While we know that fashion trends change from time to time, the administrative staff has the discretion to determine appropriateness.

DRESS CODE (K4 - 5th GRADES)

All students should look neat and well groomed. Clothing should be comfortable and of the nature which allows the child's full participation in school activities.

K4 – 2nd Grades

1. Dresses, skirts, jeans, slacks or shorts may be worn. Dresses, skirts, and shorts should be an appropriate length. **Skirts, pants, shorts, or tops/sweaters with holes/rips/tears (even if there is a fabric backing) are not allowed.**
2. Strapless tops, halter tops, and midriff blouses are not to be worn.
3. All pants must be worn at the appropriate height (no sagging).
4. Sunglasses, hats, caps or other head coverings will not be worn in the building.
5. Shirts advertising alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, controlled substances, or those with obscene or questionable messages on them will not be permitted.

6. Shoes or sandals must be worn at all times (including after school). No rubber flip-flops (shower shoes) or five finger shoes.
7. Shirts or tops must be worn with shorts, jeans, or trousers at all times.
8. Boys may not wear earrings. Earrings worn by girls in the ear lobes is the only approved jewelry that may be worn that requires body piercing.
9. Hair should be clean and neatly styled. No extreme hair styles or colors are allowed. Boys may not wear their hair covering the entire ear, eyebrows, or on the collar.

3rd – 5th Grades

1. Dresses, skirts, jeans, slacks or shorts may be worn. Girls are encouraged to dress modestly; therefore, an appropriate length for dresses, skirts, and shorts would be mid-thigh. Jeggings and/or leggings are allowed but must be worn with a dress/shirt that is no shorter than five inches from the bend of the back of the knee.
2. **Skirts, pants, shorts, or tops/sweaters with holes/rips/tears (even if there is a fabric backing) are not allowed.** Bicycle shorts and any clothing that is too tight or too revealing may not be worn.
3. Dresses with uneven hemlines at the shortest point cannot exceed five inches from the back of the bend of the knee.
4. Strapless tops, halter tops, racerback tops, spaghetti straps and midriff blouses may **not** be worn. Tank top garments must be at least one inch (1") wide or the width of two fingers across the shoulder. Blouse sleeve openings should fit snugly around the arm.
5. Appropriate undergarments must be worn and should not be visible. (No undergarment straps visible.)
6. All pants must be worn at the appropriate height (no sagging).
7. Sunglasses, hats, caps, or other head coverings will not be worn in the building.
8. Shirts advertising alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, controlled substances, or those with obscene or questionable messages on them will not be permitted.
9. Shoes or sandals must be worn at all times (including after school). No rubber flip-flops (shower shoes) or five finger shoes.
10. Shirts or tops must be worn with shorts, jeans, or trousers at all times.
11. Boys may not wear earrings. Earrings worn by girls in the ear lobes is the only approved jewelry that may be worn that requires body piercing.
12. Hair should be clean and neatly styled. No extreme hair styles or colors are allowed. Boys may not wear their hair covering the entire ear, eyebrows, or on the collar.

Students who dress carelessly while in the lower grades find it difficult to adjust to the dress code when they enter the 6th grade. The earlier we teach children neatness and appropriateness, the better prepared they will be.

DRESS CODE (6th – 12th GRADES)

The following is a detailed description of what students are allowed and not allowed to wear to school. This list may not be all inclusive. The school administrative staff has final discretion with regards to proper or acceptable dress.

BOYS

Allowed

1. Dress pants, khakis, and jeans. Pants must be worn at the waist level.
2. Boys may wear shorts. Shorts must be hemmed and worn at the waist level. **Shorts must have belt loops.**
3. Shoes must be worn at all times (including after school).
4. Hair must be neat, clean, and out of the eyes. Hair must not cover the entire ear, eyebrows, or the collar. **Boys must be clean-shaven at all times** and sideburns must not extend below the ear lobe.

Not Allowed

1. Tank tops, sleeveless shirts, underwear type T-shirts, or any type T-shirt that displays inappropriate messages relating to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex, Satan, or other items deemed inappropriate or a distraction to others by the school.
2. Any clothing item with holes/rips/tears (even if there is a fabric backing).
3. Sagging, baggy, or calf length pants or shorts are not to be worn.
4. Sweat pants, wind suit pants, athletic pants or shorts, pants or shorts without **belt loops and joggers.**
5. Any type of shower flip-flops.
6. Hair must not be tied up or held back from the forehead in any fashion. No mustaches, beards, or sideburns below the ear lobe. No extreme hair styles or colors (Mohawks or unnatural colored hair).
7. No earrings, body piercing, or exposed undergarments.
8. Tattoos deemed excessive or inappropriate.
9. No hats, visors, sweat bands, or sunglasses in the building or classroom.
10. No minimalist, five finger running shoes, other than for sporting events.
11. No "Chubbies" style shorts.

GIRLS

Allowed

1. Blouses, polo shirts, casual shirts, sweaters and T-shirts that have a sleeve. Sleeveless blouses, dresses and tops are acceptable as long

- as the strap is a minimum of one inch (1") wide or the width of two fingers across the shoulder. All excessive length shirts, or shirts designed to be tucked in, must be tucked in at all times.
2. Slacks and jeans are acceptable and must be worn at the appropriate level.
 3. Shorts, skirts, and dresses (with sleeves or sleeveless) are allowed provided they are of the appropriate length which is no shorter than five inches from the bend of the back of the knee.
 4. Shoes must be worn at all times (including after school).
 5. Hair must be neat and clean at all times.
 6. Jewelry may be worn in moderation.
 7. Leggings/yoga pants are allowed but must be worn with a dress/shirt that does **not exceed five inches from the back of the bend of the knee.** (Please also refer to rule #10 below.)
 8. Shirts with open sleeves must have straps at least one inch (1") covering the shoulders.
 9. Loosely woven, mesh, or sheer shirts may be worn with a tank underneath that has straps of at least one inch (1") covering the shoulders.
 10. Dresses/skirts with uneven hemlines at the shortest point cannot exceed five inches from the back of the bend of the knee.

Not Allowed

1. Any type of sleeveless shirt, dress, or top where the strap is less than one inch (1") wide or the strap is less than the width of two fingers across the shoulder, racerback shirt/dress, deep V-neck shirt, low cut round neck shirt, cropped or bare midriff shirt, off the shoulder or shoulder baring, or underwear type T-shirt. T-shirts must follow the same guidelines as for boys.
2. Any clothing item with holes/rips/tears (even if there is a fabric backing).
3. Baggy or sagging pants.
4. Sweat pants, wind suit pants, athletic pants, **joggers** or shorts.
5. No extreme hair styles or colors.
6. No body piercing or exposed undergarments.
7. Tattoos deemed excessive or inappropriate.
8. No hats, visors, sweat bands, or sunglasses in the building or classroom.
9. No backless shirts or dresses unless worn with an appropriate undershirt.
10. Dresses or skirts with lace or a sheer overlay must have a layer underneath that is no shorter than five inches from the back of the bend of the knee.

It is the duty of each teacher to ensure that the dress code is enforced. Likewise, it is the responsibility of each parent or guardian to ensure that the dress code is observed. Final say with regards to the dress code rests with the school administration.

CHAPEL ATTIRE

There will be times during the school year where special dress will be required of students such as field trips, assemblies, award ceremonies, graduation, sporting events, and other activities. Students will be required by staff members directing these activities to dress in a specific manner. The purpose of this is to project the best possible image of our students and of the school.

Clothing such as dresses, skirts, shirts, and tops, etc., must follow the same guidelines with regards to length and strap width as is the case during the regular school day.

Guidelines for acceptable chapel attire are as follows:

Boys

Collared dress shirt or polo style shirt with collar (tucked inside pants)

Dress slacks or khakis

Tie (may be required based upon event)

Dress shoes/socks

Shirt and pants should be free of wrinkles/neatly pressed

No denim/blue jeans, shorts, or athletic shoes

Jackets, if needed, should be in the same dress style (no hoodies)

Clean shaven face – no exceptions

Girls

Dress or skirt with a dressy top (no t-shirts or casual shirts)

Dress pants or khakis, no soft flares, no stretch jegging type pants, no rompers)

Dress shoes

No denim/blue jeans, shorts, or athletic shoes

The entire hem (front, side, back) of dresses/skirts must be NO MORE THAN 5 inches from the bend of the back of the knee. If the dress has a mesh or translucent outer layer, the INNER layer must meet this length requirement.

Strap width must be at least one inch.

***Repeated dress code offenders or students reporting in non-compliant attire may be subject to being withheld from participating or attending certain programs OR may be assigned Saturday detention.**

DANCE ATTIRE

Homecoming:

Boys

Slacks (no jeans) No shorts Collared shirt Shoes required Tie optional

No caps/hats, sunglasses, walking canes, etc.

Tiftarea males must be clean shaven and hairstyle must meet TA requirements.

Girls

Cocktail dress
Dressy pants (no jeans) and appropriate top
Shoes required

Guests

Must adhere to the Dance Attire guidelines
Must be pre-approved
Must have completed 7th grade and must not be older than 20 years of age

Prom:

Boys

Formal attire: tuxedo, suit (jacket, tie, dress shirt, slacks)
No caps/hats, sunglasses, walking canes, etc.
Dress shoes required
Tifarea males must be clean shaven and hairstyle must meet TA requirements

Girls

Formal dress
Shoes required
**Students and parents are expected to use good judgment and remember that this is a high school event when selecting appropriate prom attire.

Guests

Must adhere to the Dance Attire guidelines
Must be pre-approved
Must not be older than 20 years of age

***Repeated dress code offenders or students reporting in non-compliant attire may be subject to being withheld from participating or attending certain programs OR may be assigned Saturday detention.**

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL TIMES

Students may be dropped off as early as 7:35 a.m. and must be picked up no later than 3:45 p.m. on regular school days and no later than 12:30 p.m. on half days. Parents that arrive after designated times will be required to sign a late pick-up form. This form will be given to the parent by the teacher assigned to late duty. **After three late pick-ups, parents will be charged a fine of \$50.00.** This fee will apply to each subsequent late pick-up thereafter.

All students that are car riders are required to be picked up through the afternoon carpool. **It is expected that everyone will drive-through the designated carpool line because it is the safest and fairest way for**

everyone involved. We ask that parents **remain in their cars** during carpool and allow our teachers to assist students with dismissal.

BUS SYSTEM

Tiftarea Academy operates bus routes that service students in parts of Ben Hill, Irwin, Turner, and Worth counties. For information concerning bus fares, routes, etc., please contact the school office.

Safety is the school's main concern in operating its buses. All students must cooperate fully with the bus driver. Older students should exhibit mature behavior and assist the driver with younger children. Students should only ride buses to which they are assigned. Any changes in bus assignments should be cleared through the school office. Students who fail to follow all school regulations and bus guidelines become subject to losing their bus riding privileges. **All school discipline policies apply to buses.**

DRUG TESTING

Students and employees may be subject to drug testing at the request of the school administration.

Any student testing positive will receive the following consequences:

- The student and the parents/guardian will be required to complete a professional drug counseling program.
- The student will be suspended from all activities and athletic participation for a period of time equivalent to a semester.
- The student will be retested each time drug tests are administered during the current school year.
- Any student testing positive for the second time will result in the student being expelled from Tiftarea Academy.

ALCOHOL, DRUGS, AND ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES (ON AND OFF CAMPUS)

Students enrolled at Tiftarea Academy should not sell or possess alcohol, illegal drugs, inhaled substances, or intoxicants of any kind. Neither should students be under the influence of any of the items listed above. **The administration of Tiftarea Academy reserves the right to search a student and their belongings if there is suspicion of a banned substance.**

Students or employees who are determined by the school administration to have illegally consumed, purchased, possessed, or distributed alcohol, illegal drugs, inhaled substances, or other intoxicants, tobacco, or be under the influence of any of the above substances while on campus or while participating in or observing a school sponsored or sanctioned event (e.g. athletic event, dance, field trip, etc.) will be reviewed for disciplinary action by the Executive Committee of the Tiftarea Academy Board of Trustees and the Administration.

Any student or employee who is determined by the school administration to have been ticketed, arrested or charged for DUI, consumption of alcohol, possession or consumption of illegal drugs or other illegal substances may expect to be penalized by Tiftarea Academy. Each case of this nature will be reviewed by the Executive Committee of the Tiftarea Academy Board of Trustees and the Administration.

TOBACCO/ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES

Students or employees are not allowed to use tobacco in any form while at school or at any school sponsored or sanctioned event. This includes all forms of electronic cigarettes.

ARRESTS

Any student or employee charged in court, for any reason, may be suspended pending a hearing before the Executive Board of the Tiftarea Board of Trustees.

WEAPONS

Students may not have any weapons, pocket knives, fireworks, or other explosives on the Tiftarea Academy campus. This includes firearms in your vehicle. It is a federal offense to have guns on campus.

ATTENDANCE

Educational research has consistently found that regular attendance is of the utmost importance to the student's success. Tiftarea Academy strongly agrees with these findings. Some absences, such as illness, may be unavoidable. However, parents should do everything possible to restrict absences.

Since the school calendar is published well in advance, we request that parents schedule vacations, appointments, or excursions when school is not in session or after school hours. **If students must be absent due to travel, a student travel request form must be obtained from the front office, completed, and approved 3 days prior to an absence.** Failure to adhere to this policy will result in unexcused absences.

Tiftarea Academy, in conjunction with the Georgia Department of Education, allows a student to accumulate up to ten (10) absences a semester or fifteen (15) absences for the year. Any student exceeding fifteen absences (without doctor's excuses) will not be promoted to the next grade or receive credit for courses taken. However, students who exceed the fifteen-day limit may appeal to the Attendance Committee. Mandatory absences related to COVID-19 will be reviewed by Administration on a case-by-case basis.

Students must be at school until 12:00 noon or check in no later than 12:00 noon to be given credit for attendance, and students in middle school and high school must be in class at least thirty minutes to receive credit for attendance in a particular class. Credit may be lost by subject period. Also, students must be counted present for the school day in order to participate in extracurricular activities that day. **Absences on Friday result in the student being ineligible for participation on Saturday. Exceptions for medical reasons or other emergencies will be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Administration/Headmaster.**

It is the responsibility of the student to make up any work missed during unforeseen absences, and the work should be made up within three school days of the absences. Exceptions will be made based on serious illness or other circumstances. Students with unexcused absences are required to make up all work missed, including tests. Students who miss tests due to unexcused absences will have their test grade reduced by **10 points**. **All excuses must be brought to the front office within three (3) days of returning to school.**

The following are considered excused absences: personal illness, serious illness, or death in the family, religious holidays, absences previously arranged with the school administration, and participation in school-sponsored events.

(Grades 6-12) All absences require a pass from the office.

- Early Check-Out (white form)
- Late Arrival (white form)
- Absence/Return to Class (blue form)

Any student checking out before the end of the school day must obtain an early release form from the office. This form must be signed by teachers before the end of break and presented to the front desk at the time of sign out. All forms must be completed in order to leave campus and avoid loss of credit.

TARDIES TO SCHOOL AND CLASS/EARLY DISMISSALS

A tardy is defined as a student arriving to school after the 8:10 a.m. bell or late for individual classes. Students then should bring a note to the office stating the reason for being late. The tardiness will be either excused (medical appointments, accidents, weather conditions, or emergencies) or unexcused, depending on the reason for the student's tardiness. Students who arrive to school late will be permitted to enter class only after having received permission from the school office. Parents of students who are excessively tardy will be contacted by the school administration.

An early dismissal is defined as a student being checked out of school before their appropriate dismissal time. Parents of students who are checked out of school excessively will be contacted by the school administration.

Tardies/early dismissals are also considered to be an attendance problem. Students will be charged with one day's absence on their 4th tardy to school or 4th early dismissal from school, and will not be eligible for perfect attendance recognition. On half days, early check-outs (before 12:00 noon) will result in an absence being recorded for the day.

TARDIES (Grades 6-12)

If a student is tardy to school, he/she must sign in at the office to be admitted to class. Consequences for unexcused tardies are:

- **3 – 5 unexcused tardies = Warning and parental notification**
- **6 or more unexcused tardies = Break, after school detention, and/or Saturday detention**

Consequences for tardies will start over at the beginning of 2nd semester.

CHECK – OUTS

Due to safety concerns for students/staff, students will not be allowed to check out of school after 2:55 p.m.

ILLNESSES

In order to prevent sickness from spreading, it is mandatory that a child stays home from school if he/she has a virus and/or fever. Do **NOT** send a child to school if they have been sick with stomach issues within the past 24 hours. Also, they **MUST** be fever free for a full 24 hours before they can return to school. If a child is picked up from school due to illness, they must be symptom free for a full 24 hours before returning to school.

SATURDAY DETENTION

Each time a student receives Saturday detention, he/she must pay a \$50.00 cash fee to the detention monitor. Students that are assigned Saturday detention must serve the 4 hour detention within one month of the offense.

SUSPENSIONS

Students serving “out of school” suspension are not allowed on campus before, during, or after school. This includes any school activities on or off campus, during the period of suspension. This also includes participation in or attendance at any extracurricular activities. Students will receive a zero on all work missed during out of school suspension.

Students who are serving In School Suspension (ISS) will be on campus and counted present. They will be isolated from the student body but will be under adult supervision at all times. Students will be able to complete their assignments daily.

SCHOOL WEBSITE

Tiftarea Academy has a school website (www.tiftareaacademy.com). Valuable information about academic progress, school news, contact information, upcoming school events, and a variety of timely, useful information can be accessed at the website.

ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

Personal devices will be permitted on campus and are to be used only at the discretion of the teacher for instructional purposes. Middle and high school students using their personal electronic devices in class without the teacher's permission or for reasons other than instruction will be faced with consequences.

Once a teacher has exhausted his/her classroom management policy regarding electronic equipment and he/she confiscates and turns in an electronic device to administration, the following consequences occur:

- 1st Offense: The device, once confiscated and turned in to administration, will be returned to a parent or student at the end of the day. One day of **After School Detention** will also be assigned.
- 2nd Offense: The device, once confiscated and turned in to administration, will be returned to a parent or student after a fine of **\$100.00** has been paid. The student will also be assigned three days of **After School Detention**.
- 3rd Offense and all subsequent offenses: The device, once confiscated and turned in to administration, will be returned to a parent or student after a fine of **\$100.00** has been paid. The student will also be assigned to serve **Saturday Detention** with a cash fee of \$50.00 due upon arrival.

Electronic devices are not to be used to take pictures or make recordings (audio, video, or otherwise) of other individuals on the Tiftarea Academy campus, when participating in school events off campus, or when riding transportation provided by Tiftarea Academy, without the permission of the person(s) being photographed/filmed. The administration may seize and search any cell phone reasonably suspected of containing inappropriate or unauthorized content. Students in violation of this policy are subject to disciplinary action that shall include, but not be limited to student and/or parent conferences, loss of privilege, break detention, before school or after school detention, corporal punishment, Saturday detention, suspension, or expulsion.

STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO POST PICTURES, VIDEOS, OR OTHER MATERIAL TO SOCIAL MEDIA DURING SCHOOL HOURS. DISCIPLINARY ACTION WILL BE TAKEN IF SCHOOL OFFICIALS FIND POSTINGS.

Upper School students are **NOT** to use electronic devices, earbuds, and/or headphones while walking in the hallways, on sidewalks, or in driveways/parking lots.

Elementary students are advised to leave their personal electronic devices turned off and kept in their book bag at all times. Any elementary student using a personal electronic device (including wristwatch devices) during school hours without the permission of his/her teacher will be subject to disciplinary action.

NEWS MEDIA COVERAGE / PUBLICATIONS / WEBSITE

Events and programs in education are often considered newsworthy and of interest to local communities. Tiftarea Academy may solicit media coverage to publicize successful programs and special events concerning students and faculty. Your child may on occasion be interviewed or photographed by the news media for positive school coverage or publicly recognized on the school website. If a parent/guardian objects to his/her child being included in any or all of the above, he/she must annually notify the Headmaster in writing.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Tiftarea Academy encourages its students to be responsible citizens when using social media. **Posting information online that is potentially damaging to oneself, to others, or to Tiftarea Academy is NOT permitted.** It is extremely important to understand that any information posted on a social networking site could potentially be viewed by anyone, and could live on forever online, even if deleted from that particular site. This must be remembered when using social network sites, and applies even if only sharing the information with only a small group of individuals. Any public posting of content created must not negatively portray the school or the school community, or violate any other Tiftarea Academy rule. This includes posting content to any Internet site or sharing by any electronic means. Examples include, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. This includes “sexting,” or any transmission of nude or explicit images of oneself or others.

Tiftarea Academy prohibits students from using social media for issuing threats, bullying, verbal attacks, or other threatening behavior, whether occurring on or off campus. Students should not use any language in an e-mail or text that threatens another person, whether it is the recipient of the message or a third party. Students should not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory remarks.

Violators of this social media policy will have disciplinary repercussions deemed necessary by Tiftarea Academy’s Executive Board of Trustees and Administration including, but not limited to:

- Notification to parent(s)
- Corporal punishment or detention
- Suspension/Expulsion from school and school-related activities

- Legal action and/or prosecution

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

At the beginning of each school year, Tiftarea Academy students receive a copy of the Technology Policy. This policy explains the guidelines and behaviors that students are expected to follow when using technologies in school or when using their tablet computers or other electronic devices on the school's campus. Students and parents are required to sign and date the policy to assure it has been read and understood. This will be kept on file at Tiftarea Academy throughout the school year. Violators of the Technology Policy will have disciplinary consequences, including but not limited to:

- Suspension of network, technology, or computer privileges
- Loss of device use for a determined period of time (student still responsible for all required work)
- Notification to parent(s)
- Detention or suspension from school and school-related activities
- Legal action and/or prosecution

DANCES

All handbook statements regarding drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and weapons apply to school dances. Students of Tiftarea Academy and their guests must conform to school regulations. Students are required to remain in the areas defined by the dance chaperones throughout the time they are in attendance. In addition, students who leave the dance are **not** allowed to return. Tiftarea Academy students are responsible for the conduct of their guests who do not attend Tiftarea Academy. A dress code for dances can be found in the student handbook (p. 20-21) and a copy is also sent home at the beginning of the year which must be signed and returned to Tiftarea. These dress code guidelines for dances must be followed by all students and guests. Anyone not adhering to dress code will **not** be allowed to attend the dance. **Inappropriate displays of affection will not be tolerated. Please see page 29.**

ASSEMBLIES

As a matter of courtesy, students should exhibit their best manners when visitors are on campus. Assembly speakers deserve special consideration for taking their time to meet and share ideas and talents with young people.

During assemblies, students should sit up straight and refrain from talking or communicating with other students, except at appropriate times. Students should not use electronic devices during assemblies. In addition, students should show respect for the Pledge of Allegiance, the National Anthem, and reverence during the devotional.

HAZING / HARASSMENT / BULLYING

Tiftarea Academy will not condone verbal or physical conduct which harasses, disrupts, intimidates, or degrades other students. Bullying of a student by another student is prohibited. As used in O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.4, the term “bullying” means an act which occurs on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of Tiftarea Academy that is:

- 1) Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so; or
- 2) Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
- 3) Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
 - a. Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.1;
 - b. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s education;
 - c. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
 - d. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

The parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a student upon a finding by a school administrator that such student has committed an offense of bullying or is a victim of bullying will be notified (New HB, 6/10). Students who engage in hazing, harassment, or bullying will be subject to disciplinary action.

FIGHTING/PHYSICAL CONTACT

Fighting and/or any type of aggressive behavior will not be tolerated. All fights and aggressive behavior will be investigated and consequences shall be administered based upon the evidence received. A claim of self-defense may be entered but is limited based upon involvement/actions. **If the administration, after reviewing the facts, determines that the actions of the participants were clearly disproportionate, the involved students may be subject to individualized consequences.**

Public Displays of Affection (PDA)

Students are reminded that PDA is not appropriate at school or school events. Discipline can be handed down by administration depending on its severity.

GANGS

Membership in a gang is illegal in Tift and surrounding counties. If a student is ascertained to be a member of a gang, they will be expelled from Tiftarea Academy.

VANDALISM

Deliberate destruction or marring of public or private property by a student will result in restitution of all damages as well as other possible penalties, which may result in suspension.

GYMNASIUM

Students are not allowed to take food or drinks into the gymnasiums. Students should not enter the gym unless they have a physical education class or have permission from the P.E. teacher. Other teachers should not allow students to go to the gym. No students will be allowed in the gyms before school, during school, or after school without adult supervision.

PETS ON CAMPUS

Tiftarea Academy loves animals and pets but requests that they not be brought on campus. Animals may frighten some children, and some may be allergic to pets. Pets can also be an added liability if one reacts in a way that could harm others. Fish will be the only live animal allowed in the classroom. Dogs used for handicap purposes are allowed.

CLEANLINESS OF CAMPUS

Students are responsible for keeping the campus as neat and clean as possible. A particular area of student responsibility is the cafeteria during break and lunch. Students will have designated areas allowed to have food and drink outside of the cafeteria.

MARRIAGE

Married, pregnant, or students with children will not be accepted at Tiftarea Academy. Such students will not be allowed to remain in school if already enrolled.

DRIVER'S LICENSE & INSTRUCTIONAL LEARNING PERMITS

Tiftarea Academy will supply the Certificate of Attendance and the Alcohol and Drug Awareness Certification required for Learning Permits and Driver's License when requested.

STUDENT AUTOMOBILES

All students who drive cars to school must purchase a parking decal and be registered with the school office. Students that drive to school are to park their

vehicles in the designated student parking area. Entrance and exit driveways are to be used correctly and safely. When students arrive at school, they are to park in the designated area and immediately leave and lock their vehicles and report to their assigned classes. Students are not to return to the parking lot during normal school hours without proper permission from a faculty member. When leaving campus, students are to use the proper exit and drive safely at all times.

Students that drive on campus must have a valid Georgia driver's license and proof of insurance. Damage done to property of the school or other students' automobiles will be the responsibility of the student and his/her family. Failure to abide by these regulations may result in forfeiture of driving privileges on campus.

The administration of Tiftarea Academy reserves the right to search vehicles at any time. Any items forbidden by the Tiftarea Academy rules are not allowed in vehicles.

THE MAXIMUM SPEED LIMIT ON CAMPUS IS 10 M.P.H.

VISITORS

All visitors are to report to the front office when arriving on campus and receive a visitor's pass. Our security system keeps people from coming in our buildings unannounced. Our students are instructed to not open doors for visitors unless they see a visitor pass on the person. If a student forgets something at home, parents are asked to bring the item to the front office, and it will be delivered to the student. Doors will not be propped open to buildings. Unauthorized visitors will be asked to leave campus immediately and are subject to being arrested for trespassing.

The school discourages having cakes, balloons, flowers, and presents delivered to the school during the school day.

STUDENT VISITORS

Tiftarea Academy is a closed campus. Non-Tiftarea Academy students may not be on the campus during the school day except with special permission. Students who have visitors must get permission from the school administration and, as a matter of courtesy, ask each teacher before bringing the visitor to class.

USE OF SCHOOL TELEPHONE / MESSAGES

Students will not be called to the telephone nor will they be allowed to use the telephone during the school day unless it is an absolute emergency. The school telephone is for official use only. Messages are discouraged and will not be delivered unless it is an emergency situation.

LOCKERS

Lockers are available for use by students in grades six through twelve. Lockers are the property of Tiftarea Academy and are subject to search at the discretion of the school administration. **Students are advised to close and lock their locker at all times.**

INSURANCE

Tiftarea Academy is in no way obligated or responsible for student insurance. Insurance is required for all students that participate in all sports.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found items will be stored in the high school teacher mailroom. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity at the end of each semester.

VALUABLES

Students are discouraged from bringing valuables or large sums of cash to school, on the bus and/or school functions. Tiftarea Academy will make every effort to investigate and retrieve any lost or stolen items but will not ultimately be held responsible for replacing these items.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Procedures have been established for various types of emergencies that might arise during the school year. Please be assured that in an emergency situation, Tiftarea Academy will do everything possible to ensure the safety of all students.

In the event an emergency does arise, we ask that you refrain from trying to contact the school so as not to tie up the telephone lines. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible with regards to the situation. Your cooperation in this matter is both necessary and greatly appreciated.

FIELD TRIPS AND CLASS TRIPS

Field trips are those activities which make it necessary for groups to leave campus for educational experiences. These trips must be approved by the Headmaster through the faculty advisor prior to making plans for the trip. Each student must turn in a field trip permission form at the beginning of school to be kept on file in the office prior to going on the field trip. Students are required to travel to field trips on the bus as a class when buses are provided. They may ride home with their parents at the end of the trip. Students may ride home from a field trip or class trip with another parent/adult as long as prior arrangements in writing have been made.

Class trips are those trips planned for education, leisure, and recreation and are scheduled through the Guidance office.

SOCIAL FUNCTIONS AND PARTIES

All social functions involving school organizations must be approved by the Headmaster through the faculty advisor prior to making plans for that function. Elementary parties are designated by grade levels and are held at seasonal times of the year. All menus for parties must be pre-approved by the classroom teacher. **For any school function in Pre K – 2nd grade, food items must be peanut free and contain no peanut product. Parents shall adhere to this rule.** Invitations for birthday parties **may not** be handed out at school. No birthday parties are allowed in classrooms; however, cakes/cookies may be served during the lunch period to celebrate birthdays. Limousines **may not** transport children from the school for birthday parties or other parties.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parent conferences may be conducted on designated days throughout the school year and may also be requested by the parent or by the teacher as the need arises. Appointments with individual teachers shall be made through the school office. No parent may enter any building to meet with a teacher without receiving a visitor's pass at the front office. All parents should report to the front office to receive a visitor's pass prior to their scheduled conference with the teacher(s).

Although our teachers are always willing to talk with and meet parents, they are entitled to their privacy. We ask that you refrain from calling, texting, and emailing teachers at home as much as possible. If you need to contact a teacher, please feel free to contact the school office, and we will have the teacher contact you as soon as possible. **Any communication should be done in a cordial and respectful manner. Remember teachers are professionals in their field.**

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent involvement is one of the most important features of the Tiftarea Academy program. Because parental participation in a child's education is a key factor in a successful school experience, parents are encouraged to take an active role in all phases of Tiftarea Academy life. Parents can be a tremendous asset in promoting academic and extracurricular excellence by becoming involved in activities such as the Booster Club, TAP (Teachers and Parents) and by volunteering in classrooms and the library. The true value of parental involvement cannot be measured; however, it has a direct bearing on the success of the school.

PARENT COOPERATION AND OTHER EXPECTATIONS

Tiftarea Academy believes that a positive and constructive working relationship between the School and parent is essential to the fulfillment of the School's educational purpose and responsibilities to its students. The School reserves the right to ban an individual from campus or dismiss a family from

Tiftarea Academy who violates any of the following:

- Negative comments posted on any form of social media about Tiftarea Academy, the Board of Trustees, the faculty/staff, and/or the students
- Any behavior, communication, or interaction (on or off campus) by parents or family members that is disruptive, intimidating, or overly aggressive
- Displays serious disagreement with the School's policies, methods of instruction, or discipline
- Interference with the School's safety procedures and the responsibilities of the School's employees while carrying out any emergency plan on campus

LEAVING CAMPUS

Each student is to remain on campus from the time he or she arrives at school until the final bell of the day rings. If a student must leave before the school day ends, the student must have written permission from his/her parents or guardians and must sign out through the office prior to leaving campus. Students will be given an early dismissal form to hand to their teachers. Students are not dismissed until they receive a dismissal slip and present the slip to the teachers in the classes they will miss so that they may receive their assignments. The signed slip must be presented in the office, and the student must sign out prior to leaving campus.

If a student driver needs to check out during the school day and he/she does not have a parental note, a parent or guardian may email, call or come to the school and sign them out. If a student does have a note, they should present a note to the office when they arrive to campus. Dual enrollment students are allowed to be off campus when no classes are scheduled **BUT** must sign in and out through the front office.

FUND-RAISING PROJECTS

All fund-raising projects must be approved by the Tiftarea Board of Trustees, through the Headmaster and the faculty advisor prior to planning the project.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT – MEMBERSHIP

The Tiftarea Student Council is composed of students in grades eight through twelve. Each grade level will have four representatives (beginning fall of 2020). If more than four students want to serve on Student Council, an election will be held. Teachers of that grade level will vote to select the representatives. If a representative misses three or more meetings during the school year, they will be removed from Student Council. Members in good standing automatically remain on Student Council each year if they continue to meet the Student Council eligibility guidelines. Those guidelines are as follows:

- Have or maintain an academic average of 85 or higher
- Have no disciplinary infractions
- Have not missed more than three meetings

Due to internships and college classes, senior representatives will be defacto members.

CLASS DUES (8th – 12th grade)

In September, students are asked to pay class dues of \$10.00. This money covers upfront costs for the homecoming dance. The \$10.00 is refunded from the cost of a homecoming dance ticket when it is purchased. After homecoming expenses are paid, the remaining money remains in the Student Council account to support various high school organizations such as athletics, literary, drama, etc. The money provides treats for high school students during the year.

INTERSCHOLASTIC COMPETITION

Tiftarea Academy is an active member of the **Georgia Independent Athletic Association (GIAA)**, and participates in region and state competition in the sports and literary events. Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities are governed by the **GIAA** and Tiftarea Academy.

DISCLAIMER

It is the intention of the Board of Trustees, Headmaster, and Faculty, that Tiftarea Academy will function as an orderly society. This handbook is designed with that purpose in mind, as it pertains to general rules, regulations, and policies. This handbook is distributed so that students and parents are well informed. Any incidences or occurrences which are not covered in this handbook will be dealt with by the Headmaster and the Board of Trustees.

TIFTAREA ACADEMY ATHLETICS

PHILOSOPHY

The athletic program at Tiftarea Academy is student-centered and an integral part of the student's total educational experience. The program is designed to provide positive learning opportunities for each student who participates. Students benefit from the development of physical fitness, leadership, teamwork, social skills, self-discipline and integrity. Decision-making skills, good citizenship, good sportsmanship, and the promotion of individual maturity should result from athletic participation. These characteristics assist in the development of individual and team attitudes that are beneficial for a successful season and for future life. Tiftarea Academy provides a well-rounded program of interscholastic athletics for all its students. Opportunities for participation vary according to the sport and level of competition.

At the lower levels, emphasis is on skills development and participation as well as team success. However, the school does not adhere to an "all players get equal playing time" policy even at these levels. At the varsity level, team success and performance become more primary objectives.

SPORTSMANSHIP

We believe that part of the role of education through sports is to teach our athletes and our community (teachers, students, and parents) to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner and show respect for the opposition and officials. **Their focus must be toward encouragement of our team and players, not to disrupt or confront the coaches, officials, opposing players or fans.** We expect our community to encourage our teams and be a positive support system for our athletes and coaches. This type of behavior helps create a wholesome atmosphere that enhances the overall program.

Good sportsmanship is conduct which imposes a type of self-control involving honest rivalry, courteous relations, and graceful acceptance of results. School spirit is a reflection of these attitudes and behavior. If a school is to succeed in one of its prime functions, that of developing good citizenship, it is necessary that our community radiate proper sportsmanship. Sportsmanship is good citizenship in action.

COMMUNICATION

Both parenting and coaching are extremely challenging responsibilities. Both parents and coaches want athletes to have a positive experience as they participate in sports. Communication is one of the keys to making this goal a reality. Athletes, parents, and coaches are all responsible for achieving effective communication.

As students become involved in athletics, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that at times, athletes may experience disappointment and frustration. At these times, player-initiated discussions with the coach is recommended and encouraged.

Coaches should communicate their expectations for all players on their teams and also communicate the location and times of all practices, team policies, required equipment, and off-season conditioning expectations.

Coaches should also communicate to the player and parents any disciplinary action resulting in the denial of a student/athlete's participation and the reason for the action.

PARENT/COACH RELATIONSHIP

Parents should share with the coach any concerns about their student athlete's emotional status. Parents should also request from the coach any information about ways the athlete might improve his or her performance.

Coaches are professionals. They make decisions based on what they believe is best for the team and for all student/athletes involved. Sometimes it is difficult to accept that a student/athlete is not playing as much as he or she desires. However, the judgment and authority of the coach to make decisions regarding playing time must be respected. It is not appropriate for a parent to question or challenge a coach's decision regarding playing time, play calling or team strategy. It is never appropriate for a parent to discuss with a coach the status of another student/athlete.

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These meetings are encouraged. If a parent has a concern and would like to discuss it, he or she should call the Athletic Director to schedule an appointment with the coach. The Athletic Director will arrange a meeting. If a parent has an unresolved concern and would like to discuss it, he or she should call to schedule an appointment with the Athletic Director.

PLEASE DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CONFRONT A COACH IMMEDIATELY BEFORE, DURING, OR AFTER A PRACTICE OR CONTEST. THESE CAN BE EMOTIONALLY CHARGED TIMES FOR ATHLETES, COACHES, AND PARENTS. MEETINGS OF THIS NATURE DO NOT PROMOTE SATISFACTORY RESOLUTIONS.

Strict adherence to the 24-hour/Sunrise Rule is required.